

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system comprising:
 - a search engine server having a first computer-readable medium containing information for a search provider's web page;
 - an advertiser server coupled to the search engine server and having a second
 - 5 computer-readable medium containing information for an advertiser's web page; and
 - a user computer coupled to the search engine server and the advertiser's server, the user computer having a monitor that is configured to display web pages;
 - wherein the search provider's web page, when displayed on the monitor, includes ads with each ad including a link to an advertiser's web page, where an advertiser is an entity whose ad
 - 10 is displayed on the search provider's web page, and a position of each ad on the search provider's web page is dependent upon whether the search provider is due payment from the advertiser.
2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the position of the ad on the search provider's web page is dependent upon whether a link included in an ad has received a predetermined number of clicks within a predetermined period of time.
3. The system according to claim 1, wherein;
 - a sponsor is an advertiser that has a financial agreement with the search provider regarding the inclusion of the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page;
 - a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web
 - 5 page free of charge; and
 - non-sponsors' ads are displayed in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.
4. The system according to claim 3, wherein the search provider is due a fee from a sponsor every time a user selects a link associated with the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page.
5. The system according to claim 3, wherein the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle.

6. The system according to claim 5, wherein a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

7. The system according to claim 6, wherein the sponsor's ad is located within the region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

8. The system according to claim 5, wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

9. A first computer-readable medium included in a search engine server, wherein the first computer-readable medium contains a program configured to interact with a database stored in a second computer-readable medium also included in the search engine server, wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to an advertiser server having a third computer-readable medium containing information for an advertiser's web page, and wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to a user computer having a monitor that is configured to display a web page, the program comprising information used to generate a search provider's web page, wherein:

the search provider's web page is displayed on the monitor and includes ads that are stored in the database, with each ad including a link to an advertiser's web page, where an advertiser is an entity whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page, and a sponsor is an advertiser that has a financial agreement with the search provider regarding the inclusion of the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page;

the search provider is due a fee from the sponsor every time a user selects a link included in the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page;

the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle; and

a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

10. The program according to claim 9, wherein:

a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page free of charge; and

non-sponsors' ads are displayed in a region of the search provider's web page below
5 another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

11. The program according to claim 10, wherein the sponsor's ad is located within a region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

12. The program according to claim 9, wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

13. A method for organizing ads on a search provider's web page, wherein information related to the search provider's web page is stored in a first computer-readable medium included in a search engine server, wherein the information related to the search provider's web page is configured to interact with advertiser information in an advertiser database stored in a second
5 computer-readable medium that also is included in the search engine server, wherein an advertiser is an entity having an ad that is displayed on the search provider's web page, wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to an advertiser server having a third computer-readable medium containing information for an advertiser's web page, wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to a user computer having a monitor that is configured to display a web page, and wherein
10 each sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle, the method comprising:

performing a category search using the search engine server for ads included in the advertiser database;

15 creating a list of sponsors' ads based on results of the category search; and

positioning the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page based on a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

14. The method according to claim 13, further comprising:
calculating a geographic region of consideration; and
removing all sponsor ads from the list of sponsors' ads when the respective sponsor's
business location is outside of the geographic region of consideration.

15. The method according to claim 14, wherein the geographic region of
consideration is a circle having a center point and a radius, and the radius is multiplied by a market
multiplier factor that varies as a function of a location of the center point.

16. The method according to claim 14, further comprising:
calculating a pacing factor; and
comparing a random number, having a value between zero and one, to the pacing
factor for each sponsor's ad and displaying the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page only
5 if the pacing factor is greater than the random number.

17. The method according to claim 16, further comprising sorting the sponsors' ads
and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the cost-per-click
multiplied by the click-through rate associated with each sponsor's ad.

18. The method according to claim 16, further comprising:
calculating a sorting factor; and
sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's
web page according to the sorting factor.

19. The method according to claim 13, wherein a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose
ad is displayed on the search provider's web page free of charge.

20. The method according to claim 19, further comprising displaying non-sponsors'
ads in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web
page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

21. The method according to claim 20, further comprising positioning the sponsor's ad within a region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.